

with the telephone company before retiring in 1986. This couple managed to raise four children in the process, who have since given them six grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, it is my feeling that we can all look to this couple for inspiration. In a time when divorce rates are astoundingly high and society is suffering as a result of this, the Malones have shown us that it is possible for married partners to sustain their respective careers, raise a family and remain happily committed to each other. I wish them many more years of happiness.

AMERICAN GI FORUM RECOGNIZES NAT BENITEZ

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 6, 1996

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, throughout our Nation's history the men and women who have served in our Armed Forces have been responsible for providing and securing the blessings of liberty for all Americans. Admirably serving our Nation have been many Hispanic Americans who have come together as members of the American GI Forum to effectively represent the concerns and interests of Latino veterans and their families in many issues.

This weekend the American GI Forum of Michigan is holding its 35th Annual State Convention, which is being proudly hosted by the Flint Frank O. Barrera Chapter. At the convention the members will be learning more about the experiences of one veteran whom I am proud to have as a constituent, Mr. Natividad "Nat" Benitez of Gagetown. Nat Benitez was awarded the Bronze Star for bravery under fire for holding his position against superior enemy forces on April 15, 1945.

His bravery was reported by the Cass City Chronicle on March 20, 1991, which recounted the event. With two flanking positions having been knocked out, leaving him alone to defend the line, Nat Benitez exhausted his supply of ammunition and hand grenades, crawled out of his foxhole under intense mortar, grenade and rifle fire, crawled through an exposed position to get more ammunition, and then returned to his original position to continue to hold the line. Even though he was the only soldier holding this position, the next day it was discovered that there were 23 dead members of the enemy force around his position.

Today, more than 50 years after his harrowing and heroic exploits, Mr. Benitez continues his profound respect for members of our military, understanding all too well the risks that they each take, especially when in actual combat. He knows how hard it is to lose a friend, who can be taken in a split second by enemy fire. He knows that training is not enjoyable, but it is essential to survival. He knows what it is to risk all for one's country, and how important it is that our veterans be treated fairly for all that they have done.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you and all of our colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Nat Benitez in his recognition by the American GI Forum of Michigan, and in wishing all of the members of the Forum a most successful convention.

HUDSON ELKS LODGE WORKS FOR FLAG AND COUNTRY

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 6, 1996

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, back on June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress of the United States adopted a resolution that gave us the stars and stripes that are our American flag. This June 14, 1996, the Hudson Elks Lodge will celebrate the 219th annual Flag Day to the day.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you why it is so important that organizations like the Elks Lodge No. 787, serving Hudson, NY, take the time to recognize Flag Day and the American flag. It's because our flag is unique and so is Flag Day. To my knowledge, no other nation has a holiday like it. No other nation has a special day when its people gather, as those will gather with the members of the Hudson Elks Lodge, to honor the flag as a special symbol.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is what makes our flag and Flag Day unique, it represents a unique Nation—the strongest, freest, greatest Nation on Earth. No other flag is anchored so securely in the hearts of a people like Old Glory is in ours.

Let's stop for a moment and consider why that is. It's because of civic organizations and people like those in the Hudson Elks Lodge who continually remind us of the importance of our flag. It's because of their efforts to raise public awareness of the flag and all that it stands for that Old Glory commands the devotion, respect and reverence that it does.

That's why, Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to address the members of the Hudson Lodge as Brother Elk. The Elks are devoted to promoting pride, patriotism and volunteerism and do more than anyone when it comes to those goals. The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks have helped to relight the fire of patriotism in every American citizen and through their voluntary acts on behalf of the community, they have helped to reach our young people in whose hands the future of America depends.

But Mr. Speaker, I owe my Brother Elks in the Hudson community and around the country another expression of my personal gratitude. That's because they stood beside me, and the overwhelming majority of Americans, who wanted to see Old Glory, our most visible and beloved symbol, protected by the Constitution, our most sacred and beloved document. I'm referring of course to the constitutional amendment to prevent the physical destruction of our flag that passed overwhelmingly right here in the House Chamber, only to be defeated by just two votes in the Senate. As long as lodges like those serving the city of Hudson continue to impress upon our fellow Americans the significance of our flag and what it means to America, I'm confident we can ultimately afford it this ultimate protection it so richly deserves.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I ask that you and all Members of the House join me in tribute to the Hudson Elks Lodge for all they have done to spread appreciation for the American flag and our country throughout their community. For those efforts, they are all truly great Americans.

A TRIBUTE TO PAUL HEIDEMANN

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 6, 1996

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to honor an outstanding individual on his retirement from 30 years of outstanding service to the community of Morley, MI. Mr. Paul Heidemann has served the students of Morley Stanwood High School as a teacher, music instructor, administrator, confidant, and friend to the many people whose lives he touched.

During his career, he has taught elementary and secondary instrumental music and directed the junior high and high school bands. He has organized the Flag Corps and helped with public address equipment for shows and presentations. He has organized the band boosters. Each year he oversees graduation ceremonies. Paul has also been an unofficial computer consultant for the school, lending his expertise since the first Commodore 64 made its appearance in the classroom back in the mideighties.

Paul's volunteer help in ushering Morley Stanwood community schools into the computer age has been tremendous. He has done so much behind the scenes, always willing to help each staff member with computer problems, even visiting their homes to help with home personal computing.

His musicianship is outstanding. Paul was named best musician in the first Big Rapids Pioneer People's Choice Awards. He plays in the West Central concert band and Ferris chamber orchestra and is organist at the United Church in Big Rapids. He has served as secretary of the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association for the past 4 years.

It is work such as Paul's that inspires us all to achieve the best we can, and to promote these qualities in others. Mr. Speaker, I know you will join my colleagues and I in honoring the work of Mr. Paul Heidemann and the legacy of service and commitment he has left for us all.

TRIBUTE TO NANCY INTERDONATO FOR SERVICE TO CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES

HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 6, 1996

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Nancy Interdonato, executive director, of the ARC of York County, and wish her well as she pursues new career opportunities.

During the 6 years Nancy served at the ARC, she was an outspoken advocate for all individuals with disabilities. She fought tirelessly to ensure those with disabilities were integrated into the community, truly making the organization an "arc" between individuals with disabilities and the community. She served as a valuable resource in developing public policy and spearheaded numerous Federal, State, and local efforts aimed at ensuring quality of life and quality services. I was pleased to have the opportunity to work closely with her on several occasions.